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## WHAT IS MEANT BY "A BEGGAR?"

It is to the house of death we will ask the reader to accompany us; but he need not fear for his sensibility, if he is over much possessed of it, for we are not going to picture any scenes of overwhelming grief. It is true that the shutters are closed, and the servant who ushers you in looks grave, and speaks in a lower tone of voice than usual; and Mr Compton, the master of the house, heaves a sigh as he addresses you, while his lady-wife raises her handkerchief to her eyes. It is a second cousin of the former who is dead—a solitary old man, who, after passing nearly forty years in a foreign land, returned home to spend the independence he had acquired, and to find of his early friends some dead, others separated, and the few, the very few, who remained, almost forgetful of his existence. But a childless widower, in independent circumstances, Mr Tracey was not long without relatives who proved their affinity; and after a severe but half-concealed struggle, Mr and Mrs Compton were the successful candidates, under whose roof Mr Tracey took up his abode. Shortly following that event, a little stranger arrived, who was named, after his godfather, James Tracey Compton; and now, after eight years of devoted attention, the anxious parents' hopes were in some degree realised. Mr Tracey had not forgotten his godson in his will; indeed, he was the only relation he seemed to have remembered. About three hundred a-year was bequeathed to little James on his reaching one-and-twenty; and the remainder of his property, amounting to several thousands, was divided between a few inconsiderable legacies and bequests to charitable institutions.

It was the day following that on which Mr Tracey died, but the mournful necessary arrangements had been made, and the will read the preceding evening. Mr and Mrs Compton had deserted their usual sitting-room, as being a storey nearer to the chamber of death, but were, nevertheless, sitting very cozily after dinner in their back parlour, the young legatee being present.

"Well, James, my boy," said the father, patting his son's head caressingly, "at all events you cannot be a beggar, though I did think your poor godfather would have provided more handsomely for you. He was not blind or deaf; I wonder what on earth could have put it into his head to leave his thousands to the Blind School and the Deaf and Dumb Asylum."

"At all events, I am glad he did not leave them over the way," chimed in Mrs Compton, with all the ill-nature of a selfish, cunning, and narrow-minded woman.

"I fancy, my dear, you took care of that," rejoined her husband, while they exchanged looks in which the ghost of a smile was on each face visible.

Now, "over the way" was a comprehensive phrase, signifying Mr and Mrs William Compton and their six children. It must be acknowledged that, in a worldly sense, the elder brother had been the more prudent. He had established himself in a thriving business before he thought of looking out for a wife, while, about the same time, his brother William, though some years his junior, fell in love, without being at all on the "look-out" for such a catastrophe, and married as soon as it was possible (to use a homely phrase) to make both ends meet. His family increased in at least an equal proportion to his means; so that, at the time of his cousin Mr Tracey's death, he, with his six children, occupied a smaller house, kept fewer servants, and in every respect a more moderate establishment, than his elder brother, who was blessed, or encumbered, with one only child, the James Tracey to whom we have before alluded. We question if it is

a good plan for relatives to live so very near to each other as "over the way" implies that the Comptons did. They often become too intimate, and get a habit of interfering with things that do not concern them. To do justice, however, we must own that Mrs William was a very amiable woman, a great deal too much occupied with her own family to trouble herself about other persons' concerns; and in the family disputes which had arisen, the elder lady had usually been the aggressor. It was quite natural that the younger couple should, and quite true that they did, anxiously hope Mr Tracey would leave legacies to their children, but they were quite prepared for their disappointment. They had had no spacious apartments to offer him, and they were even aware, that when he had visited them, the necessary unquiet of a small house which contained so large a family, was any thing but agreeable to a nervous invalid. Latterly, however, they had been conscious of a sinister influence, though, had they known precisely in what manner it had been exerted, perfect candour on their part would have been more than a match for the duplicity of their enemy. But this was not the case; poor Mr Tracey's behaviour for the last two years had grown gradually cooler and cooler, and yet there had been neither word nor action sufficiently marked to demand an explanation of it. This is a common state of things, and it must be confessed that the pride which accompanies a clear conscience in such matters often stands in the way of one's worldly interest. In a downright, tangible quarrel, even the party offending is seldom the one first to hold out the olive branch; but the case of the secret maligner is far worse, for he has the advantage of making the first or "proof" impression, and the credulous listener seldom opens his eyes and ears of his own accord to the other side of the question; nay, if pride does yield, and the innocent volunteers a defence, facts, circumstances—the very flood-gates of truthful eloquence—must be opened before the "stuffed bosom" can be cleansed of the "perilous stuff which weighs upon the heart."

Unfortunately, the latter plan had not been adopted by the younger Comptons, and Mr Tracey died with the firm conviction that every trifling act of kindness and civility had been dictated by the hope of a legacy, and that even the children had been tutored to please him; faults also had been hinted at which did not exist, and to the most innocent observations a false meaning had been given. Surely nothing under the sun is so easy as misrepresentation, except—telling the truth. Of course, Mrs Compton senior had insinuated (it was out of her line of policy to assert) that she and her husband were not "beggars"—they wanted nothing from him—which, we are afraid, if sincerely believed, is a most persuasive argument with a certain class of persons who have money to leave. These people have such a dread of their money being spent—not considering that, wisely distributed, one spring may fertilise many plains, and make seeds grow where all before was barren. Certainly, even a few hundred pounds to William Compton would have smoothed an anxious brow, and spared many an act of self-denial; however, he and his family did without them.

Of the worldly retribution so often remarked, nothing is more common than to find money, not altogether honestly acquired, either in a few years scattered to the winds, or become a source of misery instead of a blessing to the possessor; and so did it in some degree prove with Master James's legacy. The assurance that he would not be "a beggar," was at first used by his parents as an encouragement to good behaviour, and to exert himself in his studies, that he

might be the more worthy of, and fit for, his lucky destiny; but as years passed on, he contrived to wrest the argument from them, and turn it as a weapon against themselves. It was all very well for his cousin William (a boy of about his own age) to fag and make the most of his time; but for himself, he shouldn't be obliged to go into a counting-house at fifteen—he shouldn't be a "beggar." A pretty life they had with the hopeful youth long before he was that age.

As for "the people over the way," they kept on their even course. The families visited occasionally, and maintained to the world a tolerable appearance of cordiality, though Mrs Compton abated not one jot of the malice and uncharitableness which rankled at her heart. Envy, too, was there; for ever since she had known her she had envied Mrs William's youth and good looks (youth always remains comparative), and now she envied her her tractable, well-managed family. Certainly, a school, or an assemblage of children, is a miniature world, in which each, generally speaking, finds its level, and it is usually an excellent discipline for only, or spoilt, children. The consequence the young heir assumed almost immediately after Mr Tracey's death, was not lost upon his sprightly cousins. At first, they could not quite make out why he had grown so fond of playing at "grand people" (what a study of character it is to watch children's play!) and at "fine houses," where he must always be the master; but at last it came out, and what a laugh there was! With one sweep of his foot, little William knocked down a make-believe house, which had been manufactured of tables, chairs, and boxes, and, mounting in glory upon the loftiest of the ruins, he exclaimed, "Now, Master James, I want to know exactly what you mean by a 'beggar'!"

This was a question which might have puzzled a much wiser head to answer. It did occur to the young heir to tell his cousins that they were often called "beggars;" but there was something in William's manner which told him it would not be quite safe to venture so far, so he stammered out, that "papa and mamma called people who had no money 'beggars.'"

"Oh! then, we shan't be beggars," rejoined William, "because I mean to make a fortune, and one rich man in a family shows the others the road."

The sisters, who were a little older, had not joined in the noisy play; but Emily raised her eyes from her work, and, with an arch look, said very quietly, "When you have quite done with Susan's box of colours, I am sure, James, she will be glad to have it back again, for she had begun to paint the green parrot that hangs out in the next balcony before she lent it you; and there it remains in her portfolio, one wing penciled and the other green, just as if he were half plucked for roasting."

This was really spiteful, for the sisters knew perfectly well that the colours, every one, were either spoilt or lost; and so, with a red cheek, Master James confessed.

"Never mind," continued Emily, "you know, instead of pocket-money, mamma pays us for the work we help her with; and we have saved up three and sixpence already towards buying a new box."

"And when do you mean to begin to write your own Latin exercises, Master James?" chimed in Susan, perhaps a little vexed at the loss of her colours.

The poor child burst into tears, exclaiming, "Oh! you tell-tale!"

"No, Jemmy, I didn't tell; indeed, I didn't," replied William, jumping down from his throne.

"No, he didn't tell," echoed the sisters; "we found it out. We saw it on the slate, and we knew he was through that book six months ago."

"Oh! you dunce!" hissed an urchin of six years old.

The young heir was glad to beat a retreat; the odds were against him.

It was a short scene of a drama, acted in the miniature world to which we have alluded; and had there not been a countervailing influence at home, Master James Tracey Compton might have gained a useful lesson from it. He might have comprehended that the term "beggar" applied to himself rather more than to his cousins, and thence have suspected that neither money nor station places us beyond the need of assistance from our fellow-creatures. But no such wholesome seed was allowed to germinate. He told his story—was pitied and caressed; a handsome box of colours was sent, out of pique, to Susan (the only person who benefited by the circumstance); and a childish quarrel, the bitterness of which might have passed off in a few hours, and yet some good effects have remained, was fretted and swelled till Master James fancied himself shamefully used by his cousins. Poor child! his parents were far more to be blamed than himself; and assuredly they reaped their reward. They taught him to cringe to those above him, and to scorn an obligation from such as they considered were beneath him; they repeated so often the advantages of his independence, that he grew to consider it an inexhaustible sum, and one which was to exempt him from all toil or trouble. It took about seven years to convince them of their error, and then they tried to repair it—by telling a lie. They hinted that the property was contingent on circumstances—that they could prevent his touching it; but he had a keen memory, and recollected, child that he was, hearing the will read. Any lingering respect there might have been, the discovery of a mean falsehood shook off, and, before he was eighteen, Master James Tracey had plunged into a headlong career of folly and extravagance.

Mrs Compton grew more cross, discontented, and ill-natured than ever. At the very time that her darling son had become the plague of her life, all "the world" of their acquaintances were praising the steadiness and good conduct of William, who had entered a merchant's counting-house, and had contrived, although still so young, to make himself of the greatest consequence in it. A blow, too, had been threatened to the pride of the family by the rumour that Emily was endeavouring to establish herself as a teacher of music and singing, and the consummation was only prevented by a very opposite, and to Mrs Compton, perhaps, a more vexatious, catastrophe. A young gentleman, with excellent prospects, had thought proper to fall in love with and marry her. Susan, whose taste for drawing had always been remarkable, had devoted herself to miniature painting, and though little more than twenty, already earned quite enough for pocket-money. It was ridiculous to call the girls "beggars" any longer. Neither was Mr James Tracey himself by any means exempt from the inward feeling of envy and the outward show of scorn which characterised his mother's sentiments towards their poorer relations; and before he was one-and-twenty, two circumstances occurred which appeared to him insults as well as injuries.

Like most extravagant persons, Mr James was not very particular and punctual on the nice point of paying debts; and on one occasion his cousin William chanced to be with him when a tradesman made some little demur before acceding to his demands. He was quite aware that James was a minor, and the article, a gun, not being absolutely a necessary, he thought the young gentleman's honour not the best security he could obtain. But he knew the character of the cousin, and turned to him saying, "If you, sir, will promise it shall be paid for at Christmas, I have not the least objection."

More than half offended at the tradesman's doubts, and never suspecting the honest intentions of James, he answered, without a moment's hesitation, "Certainly, I will take care you are paid."

Here was a mortifying example of a "beggar's" reputation being worth more than the expectations of a young gentleman of property; yet before Christmas arrived the affair was nearly forgotten, and William paid the twenty pounds out of his own earnings. It is true, his cousin afterwards refunded it; but what then! He had submitted to obligation from William only because he dared not mention it at home. As for William, it was certainly hard to be called on to spare such a sum from the sweet money he had earned—that money which seems beyond any other so especially one's own—but it was preferable to forfeiting his word. The next preference, however, which was shown, was one far more difficult to pardon.

For once the views of Mr James Tracey and those of his parents chanced to coincide. He fixed his affections on one of the belles of the place, Alice Merton by name, who was pretty and clever, and, moreover, entitled to five thousand pounds, independently of the fortune it was probable her father would leave her. But she actually preferred "poor" William. Whether it was on account of the three or four inches in height by which he outstripped his cousin James, or that his hair was darker, or that his voice was deeper, or that the pretty Alice suspected he loved her the better of the two, it is impossible to decide, for there is no accounting for the caprices of women. However, "the course of true love never did run smooth," and on this occasion the "flinty-hearted" father most decidedly favoured the views of the wealthier aspir-

ant. James had been articled to a solicitor (the law seemed a profession suitable to his prospects), and though he had been any thing but studious, by dint of "grinding" and "cranking" he managed to pass his examination. With a portion of his fortune the share of a business in his native town was purchased, and thus seemingly established, to the elders on both sides, as well as to the gentleman himself, the match seemed in every respect desirable. Poor Alice! what an array against her—and what bitter tears she shed! Still, though like a reed she seemed bent to the earth, the firm spirit of her resolves was not broken.

They had long loved each other, but only in a moment of sorrow did the secret escape the lips of William Compton. It is true he had never lost sight of the one great object which had been the ambitious hope of his childhood, namely, to achieve something more than independence; but he was still far from the goal, and he felt he had no right to ask the hand of Alice Merton. Yet when deep emotion and the strong temptation of opportunity had wrung the truth from him, he certainly had not philosophy enough to do other than rejoice in the sweet promise of her affection—for she did promise that though she would not wed in opposition to her father's wishes, she would at least be firm in the rejection of all others. We do not believe the pretty Alice ever made any appointments with her lover, though it was strange how very often they chanced to meet. However, a trial of their constancy was at hand.

We have said that William Compton had contrived to make himself eminently useful to his employers—so much so, that his salary had been regularly increased; but the sudden death of the most active partner determined them to send William to London for the next twelve months, for the purpose of conducting their business in the metropolis. Assuredly, he felt that the implicit confidence they placed in his talents and integrity did him honour, and would most probably prove one of those stepping-stones to fortune which do occasionally present themselves to such as have eyes to see, and skill to take advantage of them. Still, it was a hard trial to part from Alice, and he was forbidden even to write to her. Such a separation is a trial of constancy, very different from the condition of those who, thanks to the humane dispensation of the penny post, may "waft a sigh," every day if they will, from one heart to the other. Letters under such circumstances may be *all true*, without containing *all the truth*. Like our earth, which is half in light and half by itself shadowed, is the human character; but in such a correspondence the bright sides only are shown, and, aided by that burning-glass the imagination, there is little chance of a year's absence cooling the lover's passion. No, no, no; an absence brightened by unrestrained and frequent letters is not so great a trial of constancy as daily intercourse may chance to prove, for *there the dark side is turned occasionally*—faults and follies are sometimes seen.

But to return to William and Alice. Mr Merton positively forbade all communication between them: although a little struck by the evident consideration in which William was held by his employers, he rather implied than promised, that if, at the expiration of a year, the young people were in the same mind, he would consider the subject. Here was an inch of ground on which hope built a fairy castle. They felt the justice of the case, and parted. We believe they loved each other with a confidence that was superior to jealousy; still, during a whole year deprived on each side of one fond assurance, they would scarcely have been human had not William sometimes envied, if he did not fear, his cousin's opportunities of pleasing Alice Merton; and had not she pictured with a sigh the many fair faces he must meet, and questioned for a moment if they would draw him from his allegiance.

But the year had nearly passed—for the lovers parted in June, and May was come—when James Compton renewed his addresses more pertinaciously than ever. It was, however, remarked that on this occasion Mr Merton gave him but slight encouragement. The truth was, that rumours had reached him that the concern into which Mr James had entered was not in the most flourishing condition. He had brought money into it certainly, but he had neither improved it by connexion nor his own perseverance. From an inaptitude for business habits, he was either behind in his duties, or a dupe: this perhaps might have been amended; but his ignorance of the value of money and love of petty indulgences spoiled all—as a sagacious neighbour very graphically observed, "That young gentleman's expenditure on kid gloves and cigars would certainly form a very handsome revenue for many a respectable family." What with one thing and another, a great portion of Mr James's property was sunk, and what income he might draw from it was at least problematical. The idea of such a personage claiming the affections of Alice Merton was unutterably ridiculous.

Mr Merton, as we have said, knew something of all this; and Alice's spirits rose when she felt that her father was becoming her ally, and she looked forward with trembling hope to the next month. The first week came, the second—three more days, and the twelfth-month would have expired. It was the second morning from this time that Alice descended to the breakfast-room a few minutes before her father, and beheld, conspicuous among a heap of letters, a thick packet directed to him, in the handwriting of William

Compton. Tears sprang to her eyes, and she raised the packet to her lips; but she could not have encountered her father at that moment for worlds. She bent her steps to the garden—not that she expected William to be there, for the term of his probation had not expired, but it was a holy spot, endeared to her by the tenderest recollections. It was full a quarter of an hour before she returned to the breakfast-room; her father had waited with exemplary patience for her fulfilment of the duties of tea-maker, although he had been down stairs long enough to read *all his letters*; he did not, however, make an observation upon one of them.

Surely that day was the longest poor Alice had ever known; and it is doubtful if the night was shortened by sleep. Morning came; a thin mist had been raised like a veil from the earth, and the thirsty sun was quickly drinking up the drops of dew which still hung upon the roses, when Alice Merton stood at the garden gate; but not alone this time. The tried one was there, who came to prove his faith. Ah! that hour made ample amends for a year's pain; indeed, some people would think a year of very tolerable enjoyment might fairly have been bartered for it. There was a third to breakfast that morning; but first, William Compton told to Alice the contents of the yesterday's letter. He had been made a partner in the house he had so faithfully served, and that packet contained a copy of the deed of partnership. He was now a suitable match for the pretty heiress.

A great change came over the Compton family. Within the next year William and Alice were married; but he did not forget his childish promise of showing his younger brothers the road to riches. Now that the family were grown up and settled, it was astonishing what a pretty and commodious house that of the younger Comptons became. Throwing two rooms into one, and new furnishing, made a vast difference. As for Mrs Compton senior, she had a serious fit of illness, said to be brought on by fretting at the good fortune of "the people over the way," and at her own son's disappointments. Instead of blaming her own folly, and learning, however late, a useful lesson from its consequences, she took to scolding and reproaching the "fortunate legatees" more unmercifully than ever. This state of things could not last. He left home in high dudgeon; and as he had not courage to break through the habits of idleness he had formed—and as his property was dwindled to a mere pittance—and as, of course, "to beg he was ashamed"—he has married a rich widow nearly double his age. Her fortune, to be sure, is settled on herself, still he derives many advantages from it.

If any parent is led to reflect on the folly of teaching children to rely on adventitious circumstances, instead of on their own conduct and exertions—or if the thoughtless but common and obnoxious term "a beggar" is in one proper instance withdrawn—this sketch from the life will not have been written in vain.

#### POPULAR INFORMATION ON SCIENCE.

##### NITROUS OXIDE (LAUGHING GAS).

ONE of the most remarkable, though not by any means the most gravely important, scientific discoveries of the last age, was that of the effects of nitrous oxide upon those who breathed it. To hear that the chemist could produce a gas which, when inhaled into the lungs, threw the tamest philosophers into a state of mind resembling that of the excited bacchanal, was calculated to strike all with astonishment; and such was really the effect of the discovery. For a time, the laughing gas, as it was called, was the theme of every mouth; and many who had never given a moment's thought to chemistry, when it was working out principles of the greatest consequence to the weal of mankind, lent it a delighted attention when they heard that it could intoxicate them, if they pleased, by a few mouthfuls of an impalpable fluid.

The early experiments upon this gas were attended by circumstances of high moral interest. Towards the close of the last century, a young man, whose early days had been partly spent in a druggist's shop at Penzance, was promoted to a situation in a medical institution in Bristol, where an association of physicians were endeavouring to add to the resources of their science by investigations in pneumatic chemistry. He was obscure and unrecommended, but possessed genius, with all its usual enthusiasm. This, in short, was no other than Humphry Davy, ultimately the most eminent British man of science of his day. It was his duty to make experiments on various aëri-form fluids, with a view to ascertain their effects on the human constitution. One of those which he thought worthy of investigation was nitrous oxide—a gas, however, of a very formidable kind, seeing it is nearly allied to one of the most noxious fluids with which we are acquainted, *aque fortis*. This terrible association of ideas had no effect in restraining Mr Davy. After some preliminary experiments in breathing the gas diluted with common air, and finding no



results of any consequence from it in that state, he resolved to inhale it in its pure form, although it was impossible to tell that the first inspiration would not destroy him. He obtained it in this condition by the decomposition of a salt known by the name of nitrate of ammonia, by the application of a regulated heat; and, on the 11th of April 1799, he first inhaled it into his lungs.

Finding that a single inspiration produced no uneasy feeling, he became convinced that a further trial might be made without danger. This was done a few days after, when Dr Kinglake was present. From a silk bag containing three quarts of the gas, he breathed in and out for three minutes, and experienced "an uncommon sense of fullness in the head, accompanied with loss of distinct sensation and voluntary power—a feeling analogous to that produced in the first stage of intoxication, but unattended by pleasurable emotion. Being still doubtful whether the gas was stimulant or depressing, he tried another experiment next day; and now, for the first time, after a repetition of the former feelings, experienced that pleasurable thrilling for which the gas was afterwards so celebrated. His hearing became more acute, and the objects around more dazzling. He was irresistibly prompted to make a variety of lively movements throughout the room. These effects did not subside for ten minutes; but so completely did they afterwards vanish, that he was next day sceptical as to their having taken place. On this point, however, he was quickly resolved by the results of fresh experiments, both upon himself and others. To pursue his own modest narrative—"Having thus ascertained the powers of the gas, I made many experiments to ascertain the length of time for which it might be breathed with safety, its effects on the pulse, and its general effects on the health when often respired. I found that I could breathe nine quarts of nitrous oxide for three minutes, and twelve quarts for rather more than four. I could never breathe it in any quantity so long as ten minutes. Whenever its operation was carried to the highest extent, the pleasurable thrilling, at its height about the middle of the experiment, gradually diminished; the sense of pressure on the muscles was lost; impressions ceased to be perceived; vivid ideas passed rapidly through the mind, and voluntary power was altogether destroyed, so that the mouth-piece generally dropped from my unclosed lips." He adds—"Generally, when I breathed from six to seven quarts, muscular motions were produced to a certain extent; sometimes I manifested my pleasure by stamping or laughing only; at other times, by dancing round the room and vociferating."

Our intrepid young chemist did not stop here. He felt anxious to ascertain how far there was a resemblance between the sensations experienced from nitrous oxide and those attending the breathing of the gases which are declaredly fatal to life. Some of these gases he inhaled with the same fearless boldness: we have from him an account of his taking three draughts of hydrocarbonate, and falling into total insensibility—he was certain that *free* would have killed him! On another occasion, he took one scorching draught of nitrous gas, and afterwards thought it likely that he only escaped destruction from it, in consequence of his lungs being at the moment pre-occupied by a portion of the nitrous oxide or laughing gas.

Anxious to compare its effects with those of alcohol, he, although a habitual water-drinker, ventured on drinking a whole bottle of wine at once. He dispatched it in large draughts within the space of eight minutes. "Whilst I was drinking, I perceived a sense of fullness in the head, and throbbing of the arteries, not unanalogous to that produced in the first stage of the nitrous oxide excitement." The other consequences were those which usually attend an excess in wine. During the debility afterwards, he took nitrous oxide without increasing the debility. On a subsequent occasion, he submitted to an experiment of an extraordinary kind, in order to ascertain if an excess of the laughing gas would produce the same debility as that attending a common wine debauch.

"To habituate myself," he says, "to the excitement, and to carry it on gradually, I was enclosed in an airtight breathing box, about the capacity of nine cubic feet and a half, in the presence of Dr Kinglake. After I had taken a situation in which I could, by means of a curved thermometer inserted under the arm, and a stop-watch, ascertain the alterations in my pulse and animal heat, twenty quarts of nitrous oxide were thrown into the box. For three minutes I experienced no alteration in my sensations, though immediately after the introduction of the nitrous oxide the smell and taste of it were very evident.

In four minutes I began to feel a slight glow in the cheeks, and a generally diffused warmth over the chest, though the temperature of the box was not quite 50 degrees. I had neglected to feel my pulse before I went in; at this time it was 104 and hard, and the animal heat was 98 degrees. In ten minutes, the animal heat was near 99 degrees, in a quarter of

an hour 99.5 degrees, when the pulse was 102 and fuller than before.

At this period, 20 quarts more of nitrous oxide were thrown into the box, and well mingled with the mass of air by agitation. In twenty-five minutes, the animal heat was 100 degrees, pulse 124. In thirty minutes, 20 quarts more gas were introduced. My sensations were now pleasant; I had a generally diffused warmth without the slightest moisture of the skin, a sense of exhilaration similar to that produced by a small dose of wine, and a disposition to muscular exertion and to merriment."

At three quarters of an hour, 20 quarts more were admitted. "I had now a great disposition to laugh; luminous points seemed frequently to pass before my eyes, my hearing was certainly more acute, and I felt a pleasant lightness and power of exertion in my muscles. In a short time, the symptoms became stationary."

After having been an hour and a quarter in the box, Mr Davy came out, and instantly began to respire twenty quarts of unmingled nitrous oxide. "A thrilling, extending from the chest to the extremities, was almost immediately produced. I felt a sense of tangible extension highly pleasurable in every limb; my visual impressions were dazzling, and apparently magnified. I heard distinctly every sound in the room, and was perfectly aware of my situation. By degrees, as the pleasurable sensation increased, I lost all connexion with external things; trains of vivid, visible images rapidly passed through my mind, and were connected with words in such a manner as to produce sensations perfectly novel. I existed in a world of newly-connected and newly-modified ideas. When I was awakened from this semi-delirious trance by Dr Kinglake, who took the bag from my mouth, indignation and pride were the first feelings produced by the sight of the persons about me. My emotions were enthusiastic and sublime; and for a moment I walked round the room perfectly regardless of what was said to me. As I recovered my former state of mind, I felt an inclination to communicate the discoveries I had made during the experiment. I endeavoured to recall the ideas—they were feeble and indistinct. One recollection of terms, however, presented itself; and with the most intense belief and prophetic manner, I exclaimed to Dr Kinglake, 'Nothing exists but thoughts; the universe is composed of impressions, ideas, pleasures, and pains.' This dose was repeated immediately after, completing what might well be called a debauch of nitrous oxide. But, unlike the case of the wine debauch, no unpleasantness or debility followed; on the contrary, the experimenter continued to be unusually lively and active during the remainder of the day.

Many other persons, including Mr Southey, who then resided at Bristol, consented to inhale nitrous oxide; and generally there was a variety of experiences in the different cases, though increased vividness of sensation and sense, and a current of agreeable ideas, were nearly uniform results. One person said that he had been excited exactly as he once was by witnessing a heroic scene upon the stage. Another compared his sensations to what he experienced when he heard an orchestra of seven hundred instruments performing the Messiah at the commemoration of Handel in Westminster Abbey. We are inclined to believe that the variety of the sensations of different persons from nitrous oxide, has never been observed with the care which the importance of the subject demands. If the different affections of different persons bear any relation to their leading and ruling passions, or to what are now called their temperaments, it would be an extremely curious fact brought to the too little cultivated field of mental science. On this subject, we present the principal part of a letter addressed to us by Sir George S. Mackenzie, Bart., in which he describes an experiment with laughing gas upon a group of remarkable men, some of whom are still living. We shall allow Sir George's views, which are those of a phrenologist, to speak for themselves.

"According to my promise, I now send to you in writing what I told you respecting the effects of a dose of the laughing gas on different individuals, whose constitutions or temperaments were considerably dissimilar. Of these I must speak in doubt; for, at the time I witnessed the scene I am about to describe, the doctrine of temperament had not been promulgated, nor was the influence of organisation on the manifestation of mental faculties known. Still, I have a pretty distinct recollection of the forms and appearances of two of the individuals I shall mention, who are dead, and if I be mistaken as to the living, you have it in your power to correct me.

The value of the facts I will state is not trifling, whether they are viewed physiologically or psychologically. The gas was very carefully prepared by the late Dr Kennedy, whose name is associated with that of Sir James Hall in his experiments on greenstone and lava, and whose death in 1803 deprived his country of the most accurate analytical chemist of his time. There were assembled at his house Professor Dugald Stewart, the Rev. Sydney Smith, John Leyden, George Cranston, Esq., Sir William (then Mr) Forbes; and I think Lord Webb Seymour and Professor Playfair were also present.

Professor Stewart was the first who breathed the gas. His temperament, I think, was nervous-bilious. Before it was administered to him, he expressed himself sceptical in reference to its effects, and said that

we should hear him count the number of books on a shelf in front of him, while under its influence. While he was inhaling the gas, he kept his eye steadily on the books; and when the pipe through which he breathed was withdrawn from his mouth, he pointed with his finger, and attempted to count, but completely failed. He had all the appearance of being drunk; and such, he afterwards stated, was his sensation.

Mr Cranston was the next subject. His temperament, I believe, is chiefly nervous, with a little of the lymphatic. After he had inhaled the gas by three or four inspirations, he threw one arm over the back of the chair, and his head fell on his shoulder. His countenance became deadly pale, and we were a good deal alarmed. I ran for water, and when I began to sprinkle it on his face, and tried to rouse him, he said in a low voice, and with some hesitation, as if it were a trouble to him to speak, 'Let me—alone, I'm—in—heaven.' Assured by this, we ceased to trouble him. He remained for three or four minutes in the same position, till the gas ceased to operate. He lamented the cessation of feelings, which he described as exquisite.

I had been several times before under the influence of the gas, and its effects on me were known to have been so different from what had been just witnessed, that I was requested to become the next subject. I begged of all present to keep out of my way, for though I should do all I could to repress the strong desire to exert my muscles, I might upset some of them in trying leap-frog, or some such freak. The taste of the gas is very much like fresh liquorice root. At first I felt a singular tingling proceeding from the extremities towards the body. Then the brain became affected, and I imagined I possessed the strength of Hercules; and the propensity to muscular exertion became irrepressible. Away went the bag containing the gas—up I started, and ran about, leaping over chairs and tables, feeling as if I flew, and not heeding damage to my shins and other casualties that occurred during my violent frolics. During the rest of the day I felt exceedingly happy, and laughed in every body's face whom I met on the street. My temperament is sanguine-bilious, with some portion of the lymphatic. I have nothing of the sanguine complexion except blue eyes, but my chest is of great size.

Sir William Forbes, when under the influence of the gas, imagined he was at the head of his own table enjoying himself with his friends, and became quite uproarious about filling bumpers and fresh bottles of wine. In mixed company Sir William was quiet and reserved, and he was only at his ease with his particular friends, among whom he had now to reckon the gas, which took away all feeling of shyness. The temperament, I think, was bilious-nervous. The most remarkable exhibition was that made by John Leyden—of sanguine-nervous temperament, and an odd being in his way. I was standing at the fire-place with the Rev. Sydney Smith, when I observed Leyden, after he had inspired the gas once or twice, fix his eye with a peculiar expression on our reverend and facetious friend, whose attention I immediately directed to it. We stood wondering what was to happen, when Leyden started up, clenched his fists, and holding them up, still fixing his gaze on Mr Smith, marched slowly towards him, with the exclamation, solemnly pronounced, 'Confound him—I'll murder him now!' Notwithstanding this alarming threat, and the ferocious expression of his countenance, it did not appear he had any intention of slaying his friend; for he stopped short, as if something had turned the current of his thoughts into a new direction, and the influence of the gas gradually ceased, and his expression became almost that of a fatuous person for some moments. From the account he gave of himself, it did not appear that his reverend friend was the special object he had in view, and that the fixing of his eye and his marching towards him were accidental. His organs of ideality and destructiveness had been for the time excited, and he was in a sort of dreaming delirium.

Phrenology not having been known in those days, nothing can be said of the effects of the gas in reference to cerebral development. But there can scarcely be a doubt that in many persons, though not in all, the predominant cerebral organisation would be chiefly excited. It strikes me that considerable light might be thrown on the doctrine of the temperaments by experiments with the gas, made on men of philosophical minds, who, being aware of the object, would attend to the inward effects, while others observed the manifestations. After a good many trials, I at length could sit still under the influence of the gas, and attend to my feelings without yielding to them.

It appears to me important to ascertain the influence of various substances on the nervous system, and the modifications of temperament which they may effect, as well as their special effects on particular organs. It is known that morphine gives confidence where it may be wanting, and excites the organ of language; while tea, and especially strong coffee, excite the intellectual and reflective faculties. But no attention has yet been paid to such effects in reference to proportional organisation or temperament. The effects of the introduction into the lungs of certain gases, on the temperature of the body, may assist in testing Liebig's discovery of the liver being the furnace in which animal heat is produced by the slow union of oxygen and carbon without incandescence. Various



substances taken into the stomach cause an increase of temperature, by an over supply of carbon. The thermometer may become as useful as the stethoscope in directing to the seat and to the nature of disease; for we know that different parts of the body indicate various temperatures, in different states, though little or nothing has yet been done to render this fact available. As increased heat is a symptom of fever, if Liebig's discovery be true, then hepatic derangement is clearly indicated, as well as the remedy—a diminished supply of carbon and oxygen. Coldness of the extremities, likewise, would indicate hepatic derangement of another kind, and indicate a further supply of the same things. But the cause may be found in both cases not to be an over nor an under supply, but an organic defect, preventing the union of the two substances, or rendering it too facile. The great difficulty to be encountered are the periodical accessions; but even this may be removed by judicious experiments, now that we have a theory to be tested. The stomach, the lungs, and the skin, are the means of access for introducing into the system whatever we may imagine to be remedial substances. In the stomach and lungs analytical and synthetical processes go on which to us are mysterious. Still, as it has been discovered, in respect to the vegetable world, that the proper articles for sustaining vegetable life may be presented in a compound form with success, we may predicate of animal life, that changes in the composition of the atmosphere in which patients may be placed, and attention to the proportion of carbon in their food, may effect changes of temperature, and remedy functional disorders in the liver, if it really be the body's fire-place. No effects of the laughing gas have been attended to except external manifestations; and these have been the objects of mere curiosity, and not of philosophical investigation, for which a wide and interesting field is open. It is well known that certain substances taken into the stomach of many persons produce no particular sensation, while they prove irritating and poisonous to others. We have seen some variety of effect from the laughing gas in the cases I have described as merely curious; and I hope that some medicine philosopher will take up the subject—indeed, not one, but many, as the field is so extensive. A knowledge of phrenology will greatly assist."

It may be mentioned, in conclusion, that nitrous oxide has not proved of any important service in medicine. The views as to the gases which originated the Pneumatic Medical Institution at Bristol have all been disappointed; but while the name of Davy shall survive to the respect of the world, that institution can never be forgotten.

#### CAPTAIN BARCLAY'S AGRICULTURAL TOUR.

In the month of April last year, Captain Barclay Allardice, of Ury—a gentleman who a number of years ago distinguished himself by his feats in walking, but has latterly occupied himself on his estate in the north as an improver of breeds of cattle and of agriculture—proceeded on a tour to the United States of America and Canada, of which, since his return, he has favoured the world with a neatly written account.\* The principal object which this enterprising gentleman had in view in his visit, was, as he informs us, to examine the condition of the rural affairs of the States and Canada, in order to assist a near relative to determine in which a purchase of land should be made. The nature of the captain's inquiries appears to us to bear so materially on the designs of intending emigrants to America, that we propose giving a glance at them for their benefit, referring to the work itself those who are desirous of full information on the subject.

The line of route pursued began at Massachusetts, near Boston; then to New York, and thence, by the Hudson, to the western parts of New York state; the frontier was next crossed into Canada; and a return made to New York by Pittsburg, and different parts of Pennsylvania—the whole occupying ten weeks of the summer of 1841. The observation made by the tourist in every quarter of the states, was that there was great natural fertility in the soil, much that was very beautiful in the scenery, and not less to praise in the manners and appearance of the people; also, that in most places land could be obtained at moderate prices; but that every where there prevailed the same objectionable system of agriculture—no attention paid to breeding stock, no process of manuring, no leases granted to tenants, each being allowed to crop his land as he pleases; and, consequently, there is a prodigious waste of means and resources. The leading error is inattention to what is called *conscientious husbandry*, or the proper rotation of crops, by which a sufficiency of green food would be raised to feed stock during winter, so as to use up the straw, and produce a quantity of restorative materials to the soil. The common practice, the captain mentions, is to grow clover along with wheat; the wheat is reaped, and, after being thrashed, the straw is burnt in order to get rid of it; the clover, after being suffered to grow till the second summer, if so long, is ploughed down as manure. The result of all this is, that the land does not yield half the grain crop it should bear,

and the breeds of cattle are poor and ill-kept. Another result will be and by become painfully apparent—the land will be deprived of all its nutritive properties, and, unless where there is a good subsoil to turn up, will be a *caput mortuum*—vegetatively dead.

At the Genesee flats, a rich district of meadow-land beyond Albany, Captain Barclay visited the large farm establishment of a Mr Wordsworth, who conducted his affairs a degree better than his neighbours, but still very imperfectly. "He has a numerous tenantry, but under a tenure which can yield neither profit to the landlord nor benefit to themselves; they have no leases, but plough and sow from year to year, the landlord receiving for rent a portion of the produce in kind. His portion is ascertained on the field after the crop is reaped, and is delivered by the tenants at an appointed hour, where it is instantly thrashed out, and the straw given to the winds. Such a system must be a bar to every improvement; it in fact operates as a prohibition of all exertion and expenditure by the tenant for increasing the fertility of his farm—it being unreasonable to expect that any tenant will use exertions or lay out capital where the landlord is to reap, certainly a large share of the benefit thence accruing, and, from the precariousness of the tenure, perhaps the whole." It might have been added to this just observation, that in many parts of England the same yearly-tenant, or tenant-at-will system, prevails, so that in such places the land does not produce perhaps more than a half of what ought to be its legitimate crops.

Near Mr Wordsworth's, our tourist was shown two desirable estates for sale—"One of 300 acres, the other of 500, with a capital mansion-house and orchards on each; and I was told the price of such land in this locality ranges from L.10 to L.20 an acre." He visited the farm of a Mr Macnaughton, a Highlander, about sixty years of age, from Lord Breadalbane's country, who "came to America fifteen years ago, with a small capital, and now he possesses 500 acres of the best wheat land, all cleared, and his own property. He showed me a field of 60 acres of wheat, and mentioned, in connexion with it, a circumstance furnishing a striking instance of the rapid rise of the value of land in this quarter. Soon after his arrival, a neighbour wished to purchase this field of him, and he accordingly parted with it for 900 dollars, which was considered the full value of it. In the course of three years his neighbour determined on selling the whole of his property, and offered this field to Donald, but now at the price of 3000 dollars; this he at once agreed to give; a bargain was struck accordingly, and the first crop of wheat yielded the purchase-money."

At Caledonia, a town in the vicinity, the tourist procured an interview with a Scotsman, from whom, says he, "I learnt that 250 Scotch families are settled in this neighbourhood; the greater part of them came over forty years ago with very little capital, many of them with hardly sufficient to purchase a yoke of oxen; they all got wealthy, and now they own farms varying from 200 to 600 acres each."

The captain now crossed at Niagara into Canada, where he was shocked with the different aspect of affairs. "On entering Canada, I had been impressed with a marked difference between it and the United States. In the latter, the people were every where distinguished by that cheerfulness and appearance of contentment which attend activity and exertion in peaceful pursuits. In Canada, there prevailed an almost universal gloom, the consequence of recent internal commotion; of the still existing conflict and rancour of political feeling; or of the withered hopes of many who, having speculated largely in land, have received little or no return for their money. This was my early impression, and any thing I have since observed, or by inquiry ascertained, has served to confirm it, and to satisfy me, that of the two countries the States hold out, for agricultural pursuits, by far the greater advantages to persons possessed of any capital. With the exception of portions of cleared land, varying from fifty acres in some situations to several hundreds in others, Upper Canada is an immense and trackless forest, forlorn and forbidding at best, and in many places rendered more gloomy and repulsive by the trees having been burnt preparatory to being cut down, and consequently now presenting to the eye nothing but bare and blackened poles. And with regard to what is called cleared land, it consists of no more than a patch here and there, on which the huge pines that for ages had been tenants of the soil, have, by the application of fire and axe, been reduced to stumps four feet in height, so thick set as in many places to bid defiance to the plough, and to preclude any mode of cultivation except sowing and hand-raking the seed. There are here no railways, and no interior water-carriage, advantages so amply enjoyed in the States; and although there are roads, they are of such a description as to be nearly impassable, excepting in winter, when the sleigh is made use of. Upper Canada, too, is comparatively destitute of local markets, or of any proper outlet for the surplus produce of the land; for the population is not only thin and widely scattered, but themselves chiefly agricultural, each family therefore raising sufficient for its own supply; and there are no towns of any magnitude to create any considerable demand for the surplus, nor if there were, are easy means of transport afforded. In such circumstances, it is by no means surprising to find that the greater number of those who had speculated in land have suffered grievous disappointment, and that

of those coming under the description of gentlemen who had attempted to convert the forest into corn-land by the force of money, the greater number quickly got rid of it, and then either betook themselves to other pursuits, or, as sometimes happened, becoming disgusted and reckless, gave themselves up to dissipation."

The ideas of Captain Barclay on this subject are in unison with those of every impartial tourist. He thinks that Canada is chiefly to be recommended to poor and hardy labourers, who will be contented to erect a rude hovel of log, and clear a few acres of land for a plain subsistence. He says the price of clearing an acre of forest cannot be less than L.20, and for a lower sum an acre of good cleared land can be had in the States. We need not follow the captain through the remainder of his journey, but conclude with the advice which he offers to agriculturists who think of emigrating. "Where the British farmer is possessed of capital sufficient for the purchase, and also the *stocking and cultivating*, of a farm, he might certainly find his account in making a purchase in the States. From the generally moderate price of land, and the opportunity he would have of reclaiming a fertile soil, or, by his superior skill, rendering that which is already reclaimed greatly more fruitful, he might assure himself of such a return for capital as I believe is not to be had from agriculture in any other country equally abounding as the States are in all the comforts of life."

#### OCCASIONAL NOTES.

##### SCREWING DOWN TEACHERS.

In former notes, we adverted to the under-payment of teachers as one cause of the deficient supply of educational talent. Our remarks then had reference chiefly to stated salaries or endowments, as provided by town-councils and heritors. We would now address a few words to parents, on the too common practice of negotiating with teachers for a reduction of the school fees.

Some parents go to a school, as they would to a shop, to purchase a certain quantity of education, as they would food or clothing, at the lowest possible price. They inquire the amount of the fee, and whatever that may be, a guinea or a half-crown, they object, and propose an abatement. Their arguments are amusing: "Schooling is very dear to what it was when they were young—Mr So-and-so charges far less—teaching is but little trouble," &c. Others, we have heard, claim a reduction because the pupil is very young, or very little, quite forgetting that there is at least as much trouble in teaching a very young child as one more advanced, and that a greater amount of professional skill is requisite in the former than in the latter case. Parents of a third variety may be found demanding a discount because they have three or four to pay for; and they quietly hint, that if the teacher will not give education to four for three fees, he shall have none. Would these parties admit such a practice in their own trades or professions? Would a banker lend four hundred pounds for the interest of three? Would a landlord let four houses for the rent of three? Would a baker sell four loaves for the price of three? Again, a fourth class will advance many pleas to the same purpose; such as—"The boy joined the class a week after the quarter day; now, there are twelve weeks in a quarter, and the fee is six shillings; therefore sixpence must be deducted!" These people would be astonished, were they informed that the teacher, instead of granting a deduction, would be justified in charging double fee, as a trifling compensation for the extra trouble caused by his urging the laggard pupil on to overtake the class. They will also plead, "The boy was unwell for three days and a half!" In short, each economical father or managing mother believes that every shilling kept off the teacher is a shilling justifiably gained.

Besides these attempts at reduction, which every independent teacher should resist, there are others to which the benevolent must yield. A widow struggling to give her child a good education—a professional brother having a family to bring up on limited means—a merchant, suddenly unfortunate, whose children may have been with the teacher for years—all have claims upon his gratuitous services. Thus, if even those who are the most successful, and hold the most lucrative situations, realise far less than calculators suppose, how great must the privations be to men of very limited incomes, thus cruelly diminished!

In one word, let parents economise every where, that they may be generous, or at least just, to the most laborious and worst remunerated of all professions.

##### THE CONDEMNED GUN.

Juries are sometimes a set of very stupid people. At the trial of a gentleman for accidentally shooting his servant (thinking him to have been a robber on the premises), which took place a few weeks ago in an English provincial town, the jury returned a verdict of "a deodand of L.1 on the gun, which we recommend to be forthwith destroyed." Was there ever any thing to match the absurdity of this—the gun, the unoffending instrument, the insensate material, is ordered to be put out of existence, for the murderous crime of which it has been found to be guilty! The thing reminds us of the consoling declarations of a nurse, when her baby knocks its head



against the table. "Come to me, my darling, and I'll pay the table—there, give it a good blow—the naughty table, to hurt my darling!" The jury on the gun case had received a good nursery training.

## LIFE-PRESERVING CAPES.

A gentleman of Edinburgh, a member of the Skating Club, has invented what we have no doubt, if used, will save many lives, and at all events be a preservative from the unhappy consequences of "boat accidents." The plan, which we have inspected at the shop of the Albion Cloth Company of our city, presents a cape for the neck and shoulders, formed of Macintosh cloth, and which may be partially inflated with air at pleasure, by means of a small mouth-piece hid from external observation. The cape we saw is outwardly a greish serge (it may, however, be made of any material), and hangs down all round as low as the elbows. A tape from the inner part of the back, to be tied round the body, keeps the cape down, in the event of immersion in water. When blown up, the cape swells to about an inch in thickness, which presents nothing unsightly; however, it need not be inflated till the wearer goes into a condition of danger—into a boat on a sailing excursion, for instance, or upon unsafe ice. As a piece of dress, it may be worn by ladies as well as gentlemen.

With respect to the buoyant powers of the apparatus, they have been the subject of a critical experiment by the Edinburgh and Leith Humane Society, which is mentioned in nearly the following terms in the newspapers of the day:—"The use of a large cast-iron tank or tun having been obligingly placed at the service of the directors by a brewer in Edinburgh, it was filled with warm water to the depth of six feet two inches. A stout man, a sailor, five feet six inches in height, and about ten to eleven stone weight, went into the water with his clothes on, wearing the safety-cape, and, to the satisfaction of all present, floated vertically at his ease, with his head, neck, and part of his shoulders, above water. Wishing to ascertain what degree of buoyancy he had to spare, weights were given to him, which he held in his hands. Seven pounds sank him to the throat, and four more to the lip; proving that he could have sustained another person in the water. The man came out repeatedly, and again plunged into the water, always declaring it difficult to immerse his head even for an instant. On this fact, the directors of the society found that, in the event of ice giving way under a skater, the reaction will effectually protect him till relieved from his perilous situation."

After this satisfactory testimony, nothing more need be said on the subject. It is quite clear to us, that if people would but be persuaded to wear one of these safety-apes, they need be under no apprehension whatever of immediate drowning in the case of sudden immersion in water; and it is well known that, except in shipwrecks at a great distance from land, a power of buoyancy for only a few minutes would save almost every life. The deplorable deaths from boat accidents on rivers, for lack of some such simple means of preservation, who can either number or sufficiently lament!

## HEAT OF TEMPER.

It sometimes happens that a character generally amiable is marred by a certain fieryness of temper, which tends to lead its possessor into painful relations towards his fellow-creatures. The ordinary demeanour of such a person may be calculated to conciliate the greatest esteem; he may be remarkable for benevolent acts, incapable of any show of jealous or invidious feeling, and free from all the degrading vices. Yet, being at the same time prone to sudden and violent anger, and unable when in that state to control his actions, all these good qualities will go in a great measure for nothing, or only cause his fatal infirmity to be the more lamented. It is generally to be said in favour of such persons, that their passion, as it is easily induced, so it passes quickly, and that the moment it is past their usual benevolent feelings regain the mastery. They are even remarkable as a class for the ability to show a thorough and heartwarm forgiveness. But these circumstances, while pleading for a gentle judgment, do not save the man of hot temper from the natural consequences of such a peculiarity. It is not one of the least of these that such a man can rarely enjoy a steady and confiding friendship. The uncertainty of his demeanour—the chance of sunshine being in one moment, for no good cause, changed into gloom and thunder—makes it impossible for any one to be on perfectly cordial terms with him. Thus, his own habitual feelings of social kindness are constantly exposed to disappointment and the vexation of unrequited affection, and it can rarely be that he gets through life without sinking more or less deeply into the sordid mire of the misanthrope. Yet it is comparatively well for the irascible man if no worse befall him. Too often, under a moment's transient impetuosity, does he commit acts at which his better nature shudders, and which blight all the remainder of life. We shall relate a case in point.

About a mile from Edinburgh, there stands a solitary house named Marionville, enclosed in a square shrubbery of no great extent, surrounded by high walls. Whether it be that the place has become dismal in consequence of the rise of a noxious fen in its neighbourhood, or that the tale connected with it acts upon the imagination, we are at a loss to decide; but, unquestionably, there is about the house an air of depression and melancholy, such as could scarcely fail to strike the most unobtrusive passenger. Yet, little more than half a century ago, this mansion was the abode of a gay and fashionable family, who, amongst other amusements, indulged in that of private theatricals, and in this line were so highly successful, that admission to the Marionville theatre became a privilege for which the highest in the land would contend. Mr Macrae, the head of this family, was a man of good fortune, being the proprietor of an estate in Dumfriesshire, and also of good connexions—the Earl of Glencairn, whom Burns has so much celebrated, being his cousin, while by his mother he was nearly related to Viscount Fermanoy and the celebrated Sir Boyle Roach. He had been for some years retired from the Irish Carabineers, and being still in the prime of life, he was thinking of again entering the army, when the incident which we are about to relate took place. He was a man of gentlemanlike accomplishments and manners, of a generous and friendly disposition, but marked by a keen and imperious sense of the deference due to a gentleman, and a heat of temper which was apt to make him commit actions of which he afterwards bitterly repented. After the unfortunate affair which ended his career in Scotland, the public, who never make nice distinctions as to the character of individuals, adopted the idea that he was as inhumane as rash, and he was reported to be an experienced duellist. But here he was greatly misrepresented. Mr Macrae would have shrunk from a deliberate act of cruelty; and the only connexion he had ever had with single combat was in the way of endeavouring to reconcile friends who had quarrelled, an object in which he was successful on several memorable occasions. But the same man, whom all that really knew him allowed to be a delightful companion and kind-hearted man, was liable to be transported beyond the bounds of reason by casual and trivial occurrences. A messenger of the law, having arrested the Rev. Mr Cunningham, brother of the Earl of Glencairn, for debt, as he was passing with a party from the drawing-room to the dining-room at Drumshuch House, Mr Macrae threw the man over the stair. He was prompted to this act by indignation at the affront which he conceived his cousin as a gentleman had received from a common man. But, soon after, when it was represented to him that every other means of inducing Mr Cunningham to settle his debt had failed, and when he learned that the messenger had suffered severe injury, he went to him, made him a hearty apology, and agreed to pay three hundred guineas by way of compensation. He had himself allowed a debt due to a tailor to remain too long unpaid, and the consequence was that he received a summons for it before the Sheriff Court. With this document in his hand, he called, in a state of great excitement, upon his law-agent, to whom he began to read, "Archibald Cockburn of Cockpen, Sheriff-depute," &c., till he came to a passage which declared that "he, the said James Macrae, had been oft and diverse times desired and required," &c. "The greatest lie ever uttered!" he exclaimed. "He had never heard a word of it before; he would instantly go to the sheriff, and horsewhip him." The agent had at the time letters of *horning* against a very worthy baronet lying upon his table—that is to say, a document in which the baronet was denounced as a rebel to the king, according to a form of the law of Scotland, for failing to pay his debt. The agent took up this, and coolly began to read—"George the Third, by the grace of God," &c. &c. Macrae at once saw the application, and fell a-laughing at his own folly, saying he would go directly and give the sheriff tickets for the play at Marionville, which he and his family had requested. It will be seen that the fault of this unfortunate gentleman was heat of temper, not a savage disposition; but what fault can be more fatal than heat of temper!

Mr Macrae was married to an accomplished lady, Maria Cecilia Le Maitre, daughter of the Baroness Nolken, wife of the Swedish ambassador. They occasionally resided in Paris, with Mrs Macrae's relations, particularly with her cousin Madame de la Briche, whose private theatricals in her elegant house at the Marais were the models of those afterwards instituted at Marionville. It may not be unworthy of notice that, amongst their fellow-performers at Madame de la Briche's, was the celebrated Abbé Sieyès. When Mr Macrae and his lady set up their theatre at Marionville, they both took characters, he appearing to advantage in such parts as that of Dionysius in the *Grecian Daughter*, and she in the first line of female parts in genteel comedy. Sir David Kinloch and a Mr Justice were their best male associates; and the chief female performer, after Mrs Macrae herself, was Mrs Carruthers of Dormont, a daughter of the celebrated artist Paul Sandby. When all due deduction is made for the effects of complaisance, there seems to remain undoubted testimony that these performances involved no small amount of talent.

In Mr and Mrs Macrae's circle of visiting acquaintance, and frequent spectators of the Marionville

theatricals, were Sir George Ramsay of Banff and his lady. Sir George had recently returned, with an addition to his fortune, from India, and was now settling himself down for the remainder of life in his native country. The writer of this narrative has seen original letters between the two families, showing that they lived on the most friendly terms, and entertained the highest esteem for each other. One written by Lady Ramsay to Mrs Macrae, from Sir George's country-seat in Forfarshire, commences thus—"My dear friend, I have just time to write you a few lines to say how much I long to hear from you, and to assure you how sincerely I love you." Her ladyship adds—"I am now enjoying rural retirement with Sir George, who is really so good and indulgent, that I am as happy as the gayest scenes could make me. He joins me in kind compliments to you and Mr Macrae," &c. How deplorable that social affections, which contribute so much to make life pass agreeably, should be liable to a wild upbreak from perhaps some trivial cause, not in itself worthy of a moment's regard, and only rendered of consequence by the sensitiveness of pride, and a deference to false and worldly maxims!

The source of the quarrel between Mr Macrae and Sir George was of a kind almost too mean and ridiculous to be spoken of. On the evening of the 7th April 1790, the former gentleman handed a lady out of the Edinburgh theatre, and endeavoured to get a chair for her in which she might be conveyed home. Seeing two men approaching through the crowd with one, he called to ask if it was disengaged, to which the men replied with a distinct affirmative. As Mr Macrae handed the lady forward to put her into it, a footman, in a violent manner, seized hold of one of the poles, and insisted that it was engaged by his mistress. The man seemed disordered by liquor, and it was afterwards distinctly made manifest that he was acting without the guidance of reason. His lady had gone home some time before, while he was out of the way; he was not aware of this, and, under a confused sense of duty, he was now eager to obtain a chair for her, but in reality had not bethought that upon which he laid hold. Mr Macrae, annoyed at the man's pertinacity at such a moment, rapped him over the knuckles with a short cane, to make him give way; on which the servant called him a scoundrel, and gave him a push on the breast. Incensed overmuch by this conduct, Mr Macrae struck him smartly over the head with his cane, on which the man cried out worse than before, and moved off. Mr Macrae following him, repeated his blows two or three times, but only with that degree of force which he thought needful for a chastisement. In the meantime, the lady whom Mr Macrae had handed out, got into a different chair and was carried off. Some of the bystanders, seeing a gentleman beating a servant, cried shame, and showed a disposition to take part with the latter; but there were individuals present who had observed all the circumstances, and who felt very differently. One gentleman afterwards gave evidence that he had been insulted by the servant, at an earlier period of the evening, in precisely the same manner as Mr Macrae, and that the man's conduct had throughout been rude and insolent, a consequence apparently of drunkenness.

Learning that the servant was in the employment of Lady Ramsay, Mr Macrae came into town next day, full of anxiety to obviate any unpleasant impression which the incident might have made upon her mind. Meeting Sir George in the street, he expressed to him his concern on the subject, when Sir George said, lightly, that, the man being his lady's footman, he did not feel any concern in the matter. Mr Macrae then went to apologise to Lady Ramsay, whom he found sitting for her portrait in the lodgings of the young artist Raeburn, afterwards so highly distinguished. It has been said that he fell on his knees before the lady, to entreat her pardon for what he had done to her servant. Certainly, he left her with the impression that he had no reason to expect a quarrel between himself and Sir George on account of what had taken place.

James Merry—this was the servant's name—had been wounded in the head, but not severely. The injuries which he had sustained, though nothing can justify the violence which inflicted them, were only of such a nature as a few days of confinement would have healed. Such, indeed, was the express testimony given by his medical attendant, Mr Benjamin Bell. There was, however, a strong feeling amongst his class against Macrae, who was informed, in an anonymous letter, that a hundred and seven men-servants had agreed to have some revenge upon him. Merry himself had determined to institute legal proceedings against Mr Macrae, for the recovery of damages. A process was commenced, by the issue of a summons which Mr Macrae received on the 12th. Wounded to the quick by this procedure, and smarting under the insolence of the anonymous letter, Mr Macrae wrote next day a note to Sir George Ramsay, in which, addressing him without any term of friendly regard, he demanded that either Merry should drop the prosecution, or that his master should turn him off. Sir George temperately replied, "that he had only now heard of the prosecution for the first time; that the man met with no encouragement from him; and that he hoped that Mr Macrae, on further consideration, would not think it incumbent on him to interfere, especially as the man was at present far from being well."

On the same evening, Mr Amory, a military friend



of Mr Macrae, called upon Sir George with a second note from that gentleman, once more insisting on the man being turned off, and stating that, in the event of his refusal, Mr Amory was empowered to communicate his opinion of his conduct. Sir George did refuse, on the plea that he had yet seen no good reason for his discharging the servant; and Mr Amory then said it was his duty to convey Mr Macrae's opinion, which was "that Sir George's conduct had not been that of a gentleman." Sir George then said that further conversation was unnecessary; all that remained was to agree upon a place of meeting. They met again that evening at a tavern, where Mr Amory informed Sir George that it was Mr Macrae's wish that they should meet properly attended next day at twelve o'clock, at Ward's Inn, on the borders of Musselburgh Links.

The parties met there accordingly, Mr Macrae being attended by Captain Amory, and Sir George Ramsay by Sir William Maxwell, Mr Benjamin Bell, the surgeon, being also of the party. Mr Macrae had brought an additional friend, a Captain Haig, to favour them with his advice, but not to act formally as a second. The two parties being in different rooms, Sir William Maxwell came into that occupied by Mr Macrae, and proposed that, if Mr Macrae would apologise for the intemperate style of his letters demanding the discharge of the servant, Sir George would grant his request, and the affair would end. Mr Macrae answered, that he would be most happy to comply with this proposal, if his friends thought it proper; but he must abide by their decision. The question being put to Captain Haig, he answered, in a deliberate manner, "It is altogether impossible; Sir George must in the first place turn off his servant, and Mr Macrae will then apologise." Hearing this speech, equally marked by wrong judgment and wrong feeling, Macrae, according to the testimony of Mr Bell, shed tears of anguish. The parties then walked to the beach, and took their places in the usual manner. On the word being given, Sir George took deliberate aim at Macrae, the neck of whose coat was grazed by his bullet. Macrae had, if his own solemn asseveration is to be believed, intended to fire in the air; but when he found Sir George aiming thus at his life, he altered his resolution, and brought his antagonist to the ground with a mortal wound in the body.

There was the usual consternation and unspeakable distress. Mr Macrae went up to Sir George, and "told him that he was sincerely afflicted at seeing him in that situation." It was with difficulty, and only at the urgent request of Sir William Maxwell, that he could be induced to quit the field. Sir George lingered for two days. The event occasioned a great sensation in the public mind, and a very unfavourable view was generally taken of Mr Macrae's conduct. It was given out, that during a considerable interval, while in expectation of the duel taking place, he had practised pistol-shooting in his garden at a barber's block; and he was also said to have been provided with a pair of pistols of a singularly apt and deadly character; the truth being, that the interval was a brief one, his hand totally unskilled in shooting, and the pistols a bad brass-mounted pair, hastily furnished by Amory. We have Amory's testimony, that as they were pursuing their journey to another country, he was constantly bewailing the fate of Sir George Ramsay, remarking how unfortunate it was that he took so obstinate a view about the servant's case. The demand, he said, was one which he would have thought it necessary to comply with. He had asked Sir George nothing but what he would have done had it been his own case. This is so consonant with what appears otherwise respecting his character, that we cannot doubt it. It is only to be lamented that he should not have made the demand in terms more calculated to lead to compliance.

The death of an amiable man, under such deplorable circumstances, roused the most zealous vigilance on the part of the law authorities; but Mr Macrae and his second succeeded in reaching France. A summons was issued for his trial, but he was advised not to appear, and accordingly sentence of outlawry was passed against him. The servant's prosecution meanwhile went on, and was ultimately decided against Mr Macrae, although, on a cool perusal of the evidence on both sides, we see the clearest proof of Merry having been the first aggressor. Mr Macrae lived in France till the progress of the Revolution forced him to go to Altona. When time seemed to have a little softened matters against him, he took steps to ascertain if he could safely return to his native country. It was decided by counsel that he could not. They held that his case entirely wanted the extenuating circumstance which was necessary, of his having to contemplate degradation if he did not challenge. He was under no such danger; so that from his letters to Sir George Ramsay he appeared to have forced on the duel purely for revenge. He came to see the case in this light himself, and was obliged to make up his mind to perpetual self-banishment. He survived thirty years. A gentleman of our acquaintance, who had known him in early life in Scotland, was surprised to meet him one day in a Parisian coffee-house after the peace of 1814—the wreck or ghost of the handsome sprightly man he had once been. The comfort of his home, his country, and friends, the use of his talents to all these,

had been lost, and himself obliged to lead the life of a condemned Cain, all through the one fault of a fiery temper. Reader, if thou shouldst ever feel thyself hurried by such a cause towards rash words and acts, however trivial, think on the fate of this unhappy man, pause, and be cool. Thou little knowest what may arise from a small ill-considered action. A rap over a servant's knuckles led to a scene of disgusting violence: four or five days after, a short imperious letter, beginning "Sir," brought two gentlemen to a field, where one fell in the prime of his days, and whence the other fled to be a remorseful and miserable exile for all the remainder of his life.

#### DOUGLAS JERROLD'S "CAKES AND ALE"

Is a merry little book, in two volumes, with plates by Cruikshank—a fair specimen of the light literature of our age—vivacious, superficial, somewhat extravagant, yet in the main well calculated to serve the end in view, namely, to amuse the passing hour. Mr Jerrold has a high London reputation as a writer of short pieces for the stage, and it is not therefore surprising to find the present prose sketches marked by a certain improbability of incident and situation which is not generally tolerated out of the drama; but, to make up for this, he has infused some remarks and moralisings of a kind for which his plays had not prepared us. The difference between the professed and real practice of men in many domestic things may be every where observed, if we look narrowly. Most men, for instance, have a theoretical and practical hour of rising. Ask one when he usually gets up, and say he mentions seven. Take this as his theoretical hour, the hour at which he wishes to rise, thinks he should rise, and once in a twelvemonth does rise; but be sure that in reality he does not in general see much of the daylight world before eight. Say eight, again, is his professed or theoretical hour, it will be found that nine is the real one; and so on. Mr Jerrold has a penetrating eye for these discrepancies. Mr Pigeon is a young man a fortnight married. Coming home prematurely from Brighton, he determines to go out, leaving his young wife, the very first night—though he is "the same Pigeon whose landlady had given him for a character, as she thought, all the virtues of a household god." "Pray, ma'am," inquired Charlotte's busy maiden aunt, "what are the habits of Mr Pigeon? He is about to marry into our family, and you'll pardon the question—what are his habits?" "Habits!" replied the landlady; "the woman's blessed who gets Mr Pigeon—gruel at ten, and bed at eleven." And these moral prophecies, on the part of her future husband, were impressed upon the brain and heart of the bride by the aunt aforesaid. "Gruel at ten, and bed at eleven" reiterated the spinster; "it seems little to speak of, child, but what a deal of happiness is ensured by the custom!" Mr Pigeon, assuring his wife that he would keep aloof from all acquaintance, took his hat. Mrs Pigeon looked at her lord with a mild mixture of matrimonial sorrow and anger. Can the female reader wonder at this? It was already half-past nine, and Mrs Pigeon sighed as she thought of her aunt; yea, she sighed deeply at the visionary happiness of—gruel at ten, and bed at eleven.

"All men," said Susan (the servant), marking the melancholy of her mistress—"all men are alike, ma'am."

"They are, Susan," said Mrs Pigeon. "Where's my handkerchief?"

Mr Pigeon is thus described on his way home at an early hour in the morning. "As the man crept homeward, there was culprit in his looks—in his hesitating pace. He had, it was true, fallen into a most delightful party—had been so happy, so very jolly; but now, alas! it wanted only seven-and-twenty minutes to six. What a beautiful morning!—yet what a reproach came with the bright sun! Sam blushed as he met the milkmaids; artisans passing to their work, made him turn his head away; the chimney-sweepers, crying their noisome trade, struck him compunctious; yea, the very sparrows, chirping and playing in his path, gave him a twitch of the conscience. Let not the reader think that Samuel Pigeon had any fear of the violence of his ill-used spouse; no, she would only weep—for she was a young wife, and had not yet come to her nails. It was a nobler feeling that possessed Pigeon—not base dread, but bitter repentance. He had been beguiled into cards—had, moreover, been very lucky—but what was luck at nearly six in the morning! He had held the most wonderful hands at loo, and had never played but when justified by both king and queen. And then he thought, and in the dissatisfaction of his soul almost gave vent to the words—'Tis six in the morning—my wife is sitting up—and, compared to domestic peace, oh! what are trumps?"

Pigeon, with heavy legs, walks on; and now he approaches his door. He scrapes his shoes as tenderly as though he scraped his bare feet; he wants to cough, but he hasn't sufficient nerve to risk the operation. He looks at his knocker; the lion's head ornamenting it seems to stare with new ferocity upon him. He touches the knocker as if it were red-hot—shakes it spasmodically—tap, tap, tap—and to Pigeon the sound seems to search through a dead, deserted house—a desolate homestead. Has Charlotte gone to her family! Or, anticipating the completion of a threat to be made in after-life, has she already taken a lodging! Strange thoughts chill the heart of Pigeon, as

he stands pricking his ears at his own inhospitable door."

To the same effect is the following "bit":—"Young Brown inherited from his father the equivalent sum of a thousand pounds. He had better inherited nothing; for, in the present state of society, we hold a thousand pounds to be not merely a useless but a mischievous sum: it is not a negative good, but a positive evil. What is to be done with a thousand pounds? Put it in the funds, says Quiet, and philosophise upon thirty pounds a-year! There are exquisite essays written to prove the sufficiency of thirty pounds a-year, allowing at least five shillings per quarter for the conversion of the Jews; essays, in which the expenses of a pauper gentleman are so nicely calculated, that it must be his own wilful eccentricity if, at the end of the year, he either owes a shilling or has one. We happen to be honoured with the short acquaintance of the author of some of these *libretti*. He had thrice been shut up in the Fleet on an income of three hundred per annum, and was consequently enabled to preach on the competence of thirty pounds a-year. It was during his third visit to the jail that we had some interesting talk with him. He was lamenting the extravagance of the present generation; and passing his right hand under his velvet cap, and turning his pensive and eloquent eye upwards, asked us if we had ever read his book. Of course we had. We, however, ventured to question the correctness of its conclusions; in a word, we were hardy enough to express our doubts of the possibility of existing 'as a gentleman'—for such were the author's premises—on thirty pounds a-year. 'Look at Higgingbottom,' said we; 'he has followed your system to a chop, and yet Higgingbottom is in debt.' 'Pardon me,' quickly returned the author, 'I grant his obedience so far as the chop goes, but there were three days in the year that Higgingbottom would not take his chops without pickles. Now, my system is so philosophically arranged, as not to admit even of a single onion. Depend upon it, my dear sir, with a wise economy, a man may always on thirty pounds a-year obtain his chop; the ruin lies in the pickles.' We were about to dispute the point, when the temperate author began to swear at a boy who entered with a bottle of port. 'And where, you scoundrel,' cried the author of a treatise on the sufficiency of thirty pounds per year—'where, you miscreant, are the olives! What! forgot them! Vagabond! to suppose I could drink port without olives! Vanish! Stop! Don't make the blunder you made before—mind, French olives!' These neat pieces of philosophy, slashed into Mr Jerrold's stories, speak for themselves. Alas for the illusoriness of all human professions, and the infirmity of all human resolutions!

Passing from these matters, we are reminded of the fine allegorical writing of the Elizabethans by such passages as the following, which relates to the anticipations of Mr Silvertop, an author on the point of finishing a great metaphysical work:—"In another month, he would no longer creep along the streets, accompanied by Desert, a pretty fellow, yet withal a timid, blushing, stammering knave, content to slink with him he waits upon, down dismal alleys, over barren heaths, at length, it may be, conducting his master to a dry ditch for his bed, and to wild cresses and water for his breakfast—a trick the varlet hath often put upon brave spirits—but, in his place, that swaggering, brow-beating, gold-laced laquay, Success, would clear the way for Silvertop, would strike off the hats of the mob, content to be so unbonneted, seeing that Success—oh! the magic of his name upon the world, hath willed it—nor ever ask whence comes he—what's his value! No matter for his birthplace, his parentage; Success has all-in-all in his name. Though he were born on the wayside, his mother a gipsy, and his father a clipper of coin—for his name, and name alone, men shall bow down and worship him. Desert weeps at the early grave of the broken-hearted; Success eats ortolans with a quack-salver at threescore. Men may certainly be brought to allow the possible existence of unrewarded Desert, but for Success, there can be no doubt of its vitality; he is seen, known, touched; nay, sometimes men dine with him."

How well, too, are some modern follies touched upon in the following description of the visit of a great foreigner to an ancient English borough:—"The church bells rang in the happy day; shops were closed; every man, woman, and child, in their best clothes, and with their blithest looks; fifty maidens scattered roses in the path of the magnificent stranger, and a thousand voices rent the sky, at the first glimpse of his right royal beard. The Spaniard alighted at the mansion-house, and though he spoke not a word of English, expressed himself enraptured with his reception. At which Tobias Aconite placed his hand upon his heart, and upon his honour declared that day to be the very happiest of his whole existence. The Spaniard and his followers having partaken of a slight repast of brawn, brown bread, and ale—a public-spirited economical townsman calculated that each man consumed a pound and a half of meat, a two-penny loaf, and two quarts of liquor—were conducted by the mayor and other authorities to inspect the public works and buildings of Hole-cum-Corner. Thus moving in slow procession down Prigapple Lane, the Spaniard was shown the stocks; at which curious instance of man's ingenuity he expressed his most intense delight. He was continually heard to murmur



as to himself, 'Great English! wonderful people!' a truth translated by the schoolmaster of Hole-cum-Corner; who, in his childhood wrecked off Cadiz, had served three years as turnspit in the most Holy Inquisition. Having duly inspected the stocks, the Spaniard was conducted two miles out of the town, to Hempstead Common, to view an antique gibbet, one of the highly-prized, most sacred, and most venerable institutions of Hole-cum-Corner. Here, again, he exclaimed, 'Great English! wonderful people!' Returning to the town, the illustrious visitor was conducted to the cake-manufactory, where was exhibited to him the whole process of cake-making; at which, as before, he declared himself sufficiently astonished, and biting a cake hot from the oven, again exclaimed, 'Great English! wonderful people!'

The royal Spaniard was, after this, shown over the vast establishment of Squint and Leer, inventors and makers of dolls'-eyes. Here a most gratifying surprise awaited the royal guest, for he was presented, not only with the freedom of the town, in a handsome pearl box, but with a document that enabled him to set up as dolls'-eyes maker in any part of England; a privilege which he declared to be the most flattering mark of national liberality and national affection. He avowed that, in the whole course of his life, he would never look into the eyes of a doll, without thinking of the worthy people of Hole-cum-Corner."

The "Preacher-Parrot" is a happy and original idea of our author. The bird in question has been brought up in an auction mart, where it has picked up a great number of the phrases of the place. Afterwards transferred to various owners, it loses the favour of all in succession by its too apropos repetition of the auctioneers' slang. The following is a specimen of its adventures:—"A very select party was congregated at the house of Mrs Limetwig, to celebrate the birthday of her daughter, the youngest of four, the fair Belinda, who, at the time we write, had entered into her nineteenth year; and although she had no fortune—at least, what is vulgarly understood by the mercenary young men of our day as fortune—she had the nobler kind of wealth in great abundance—she was accomplished to the verge of perfection. Her pine-apples painted on white satin, were equal, if not superior, to any in Covent Garden. And then her portraits of dear and particular friends—they lived and looked! It was only known to a few, but she had contributed some of the fancy heads, to either the Bloomsbury or the Bagnigge Wells Beauties, we forget which. Her modesty withheld her name; but they who had seen one of her faces, could easily point out the whole gallery. They had all the same sweet small mouth; in which the artist finely indicated the ethereal nature of the heroine, showing that with such a mouth it was impossible to eat. A mouth—if we may dare even to approach a masculine simile—almost the size of a shirt-button-hole; indeed, when any of the teeth were seen, it might almost be doubted if they were not the pearl button itself. And then the Dian-like purity illustrated in such little lips!—they might, with difficulty, compass a whistle, but could never be brought to perpetrate a kiss. The eyes were worthy of the lips; nice little beads, looking up in one head and down in another, as, in obedience to a wire, we see the different orbs of different dolls. And then the flesh and the general expression of the face—so soft, so very sweet, so unlike the flesh that, on this dull earth, is wooed and won and taken before a parson: no, it is clear such beauties live upon honey-dew like humming-birds—on conserves of roses, and jessamine paste. They are a great improvement to the ideal woman of Wordsworth, and are

—'much too good  
For human nature's daily food.'

It may be thought that we have lingered too long on the one ability of Belinda, seeing that she has so many; but we could not for the life of us let the reader pass in ignorance of the fair hand so successfully helping the advancement of high British art. We have paused—many a time have we paused—before these heads, contemplating them with the same profound sense of the beautiful, that in our schoolboy days we have lavished upon sugar-plums; nay, it may be wrong to own the weakness, but, perhaps, with the self-same wish. To return to the birth-day party.

We never see a young lady, surrounded by eight or ten bachelors, take off her gloves, and seat herself at the piano, but we shudder, from an association of ideas—yes, we instantly think of the infernal machine! Who knows how many men may be killed dead on the spot by the first crash! Belinda played divinely. Edgar Flimzy, the younger son of a country banker, looked very serious as the music proceeded. Mrs Limetwig observed the gravity of the young gentleman, and, doubtless to divert it, desired Belinda to sing. Belinda obeyed, and sang in the finest possible taste. Had she been wound up for the occasion like a musical snuff-box, she could not have acquitted herself with more precision, and with less vulgar impulse: every note fell from her lips as if it were chiselled—and then her execution! Poor Edgar Flimzy—his heart was dragged up and down the gamut until exhausted; when, at the last three-minute shake of the songstress, it fell into a thousand little pieces. Indeed, we would not own the heart that could stand that shake. There was a general burst of applause, followed for a moment by a profound silence. Mrs Limetwig looked proudly at

the young bachelors, but favoured the younger son of the banker with a look entirely for himself.

In this pause, a voice cried out, and it seemed as if accompanying the glances of Mrs Limetwig—'Does nobody offer?'

A titter, deepening into a laugh, went round the room, and Mrs Limetwig and Belinda turned to scarlet. 'Oh—ha! ha!' observed the mamma, evidently restraining excessive laughter; 'that teasing bird, which William's godfather brought him—how came it here?' and the servant was immediately ordered to secure the intruder. But the parrot was a social parrot, and resolved not to leave the party; hence, after many ineffectual attempts to catch it, for its leg, though weak, had been set by some Samaritan, the bird was suffered to remain.

'It was downright cruelty to ask, but would'—thus spoke the banker's younger son—'would Miss Limetwig sing his favourite song—the—'

'Certainly,' answered Mrs Limetwig for her daughter; and the favourite song—we forget its title and words, but its being very popular may account for that—was executed with incomparable power.

'Your only unmarried daughter?' observed the banker's son, in a low voice, to Mrs Limetwig.

'All married, except my dear Belinda; and it would break my heart, I believe, to part with her. Yes, sir,' said the mother, affected even by the probability of a separation; 'Belinda, sir, is—'

'The last lot, gentlemen—the last lot!' cried the parrot; and the guests burst into uncontrolled laughter. Belinda, with fine presence of mind, immediately struck the keys of the piano, as though quite unconscious of the interruption, and in a minute or two was in the midst of a furious battle-piece.

'If I might aspire to the notice of Miss Limetwig,' said the banker's son to the mother, 'I hope that—'

'Going for a song, gentlemen!' cried the parrot; and again its words were greeted with a shout. 'It was too much; the creature—where could it have learned such words!—should be sent from the house.' Such was the sentence pronounced by Mrs Limetwig, and after some little difficulty carried into execution. But the charm of the night was broken: Mrs Limetwig was irritated, Belinda languid, and the banker's son—whether the last declaration of the bird had 'given him pause,' we know not—not once, for the remainder of the evening, ventured to speak of Belinda. She died a maid, a victim to the intrusion of truth.

What would become of the world, if truth interfered in every marriage?"

#### THE BOTHY SYSTEM.

A BOTHY is a rude barrack, or place of lodging, for farm-servants, where they are kept very much on the principle that a gentleman keeps his hounds—a roof over their head, a few of the meanest articles of furniture, and no kind of moral superintendence. In former times, it was customary for agriculturists and those in their employment to live under the same roof, and the habitual and familiar intercourse in and out of doors produced ties of friendship. The one party, at least, took an interest in the welfare of the other; and if there was homeliness of manner, there was at the same time propriety of behaviour. The master found himself under the necessity of setting an example, and the servants felt that to forfeit esteem was to lose their means of existence. Thus, the action and reaction of opinion kept all right. In these times, however, all the servants of the establishment did not live under the roof of their employer. Married ploughmen lived in a cottage somewhere on the land, and their families, on occasions, lent assistance in field labour, herding cattle, or, as Burns says, "running an errand to a neebour town."

A time came when all these old-world practices were blown up. The demand for agricultural produce, consequent on the French war and other circumstances, excited a spirit of improvement in husbandry, which has, in the space of forty years, about as effectually changed the face of Scotland as if the old country had been carried away and a new one set down in its stead. There is now scarcely such a thing as a thatched farm-house of the old fashion. The farm-houses are good slated buildings; the farmer lives in a style better than a landed gentleman half a century ago, paying, at the same time, ten times the old rent; and in several quarters of the country, all the operations connected with the farm are executed by young unmarried men, hired for short terms, and who are usually lodged in a bothy. In some districts, the practice of employing only unmarried men has not yet been introduced; and in such cases, the ploughmen with their families reside in cottages near the homestead, a practice which it is a pity should ever be broken up.

The reader will now understand what is meant by the bothy system, which, from whatever cause, we are assured is effecting a serious demoralisation of manners among the peasantry in all the places in which it has taken root. The evil, it appears, has attracted the attention of those philanthropists who take pains to look below the surface of things; and the Highland Society has, we observe, lately given a premium to the writer of an essay on the subject. As readers in the south may be interested in knowing the mechanics of a bothy, we can tell them something of it from the account which we have just alluded to. First, of the inmates: they are all un-

married men; their salary, individually, is from L.10 to L.12 per annum, paid in money. Besides this allowance, they have each two pecks of oatmeal weekly, nearly two quarts of milk per day, or an equivalent in small beer or money; and frequently a quantity of potatoes during the winter half year. Next, for their lodgment: they are provided with an out-house connected with the farm-offices, which contains a few rough stools, benches, or chairs, sometimes a table, a pot for boiling water in, fuel, either of wood or coal, salt, light, and a few small articles, which usually belong to the ploughmen themselves, such as a small chest for holding meal, a wooden or tin bowl, and a horn spoon. The place is provided with beds, consisting of common frames, ticks stuffed with chaff, blankets, and coarse linen sheets. Sometimes the sleeping place is not in the bothy, but in a room adjoining the stable. The inmates cook their own victuals—in plainer terms, make their own porridge—make their own beds, and perform other offices for themselves. The bothy establishment is under no other jurisdiction than that organised by its own inhabitants, and that is as lax as may be. There is no privacy; and a virtuously disposed individual has no chance of escape from his comrades. A farmer, who has had the courage to expose the system in a well-written essay on the subject, declares that the corruption of manners is complete; for, says he, "should any of the inmates of the bothy be disposed to rational enjoyment, they are most probably exposed to the interruption of noisy ribaldry and unbecoming behaviour, which disturb all composure, or all commendable social intercourse. I have witnessed this evil on my own premises. I have had, of late years, several single men-servants from a district of country where there are few bothies. At first, they read in their spare hours; and some contributed towards procuring a newspaper and periodical work for themselves, besides having the use of mine. The interruptions of the old bothy inmates, however, soon altered their habits. They first gave over paying for a paper of their own, and latterly declined to read one, except on rare occasions, afforded to them gratis; and they gradually became very consistent bothy-men. They professed to regret this, but alleged they were obliged to yield to the circumstances under which they were placed. Indeed, I am persuaded the minority would find it impossible to alter the nature of bothy characteristics, or even to follow the superior bent of their own minds. One thoughtless or mischievous associate is much more likely to become a leader in a bothy than one of an opposite character. The present situation of unmarried farm-servants cannot, therefore, in the very nature of things, conduce to any other result than that which we have contemplated; and while they continue to be so situated, the same elements of corruption, produced by like exciting causes, will assuredly mingle their bitter fruits with the devoted community."

Speaking of the habits acquired under this vicious system, the same writer observes, that intemperance is not the least common. "They frequently either purchase whisky, and use it in their bothies on high occasions, or resort in a body to the public-house, where they seldom fail to indulge beyond their physical capabilities. These debauches, especially when committed in their own dwellings, are followed by language the very excess of ribaldry, and by conduct resembling that of a tribe of savages; and as these extraordinary revels last throughout the greater portion of the night, besides all other personal sacrifices and injuries, the want of proper rest incapacitates the misguided and infatuated victims for the work of the succeeding day. While they were inmates of the farm-house, they could not absent themselves without discovery, far less keep a bottle for the use of themselves and friends in the manner described. Now, they may do both. They can go wherever, or do whatever, they please, provided they are at their work in working hours, however indisposed or unprepared for its execution. The temptations and opportunities to indulge in intemperance have not yet made many servants habitual drunkards. They exceed only occasionally, when urged by the contaminating system of association. But at both terms of the year many of them give full license to their depraved appetites. A great proportion of them expend their hard-earned means, on these occasions, most profusely and recklessly. From the period of leaving their old service and entering on their new, being generally every half year, the average expenditure of each unmarried man-servant, on intoxicating liquors and other evil indulgences, cannot be less than ten or fifteen shillings. Some of them expend one or two pounds, thus wasting nearly the half of their wages. The poverty produced by these short-lived seasons of revelry, is the best safeguard against their repeating acts of the same description until the wages are again won, to be expended in a similar manner. This regular routine of inebriety seldom gets a check until the victims are overwhelmed by debt. The money that went into the pocket of 'mine host,' ought to have gone to pay the shoemaker and tailor. Indeed, so unguarded and indiscreet are bothy servants in general in their expenditure, that they have often to purchase their necessities on credit. Few are able to pay in ready money, and their wages, even before they are earned, are consequently almost all uplifted, or pledged, for a portion of both necessities and indulgences; and as they are continually changing their situations, some of them owe to give a



parting call to their creditors. This improvident and dishonest conduct destroys in them every honourable feeling, and forms a barrier to the cultivation of habits of economy in after life.

The reader can judge from these facts, why many rural female-servants have become so depraved in their habits, and inefficient in the discharge of their duties; and, moreover, how little they are qualified to be wives and mothers, and what kind of promise their offspring hold out for the future cultivators of the soil. The labourers are not the only sufferers from this depth of degeneracy into which they are plunged, and are plunging, it is to be feared, still deeper and deeper. Their masters' interests and comforts are materially involved. They are wanting in their duty to themselves, and they cannot be dutiful to others. Many of them, being totally regardless of the interests of their employers, become mere eye-servants; and all the strictness with which they are watched cannot ensure the efficient performance of their duty."

We must have done with this odious picture of rural depravity. Having brought the subject fairly under public attention, we leave it to the consideration of those who have it in their power to carry practical remedies into effect.

#### GLASS WAISTCOATS.

The very ingenious discovery of working glass into a substance resembling the richest silk, is now being brought into very general operation, and in various ways, such as gentlemen's waistcoats and stocks, ladies' dresses, and many other articles of decoration, in the most splendid patterns. It is superior even to silk in flexibility and softness, and the durability of it (a point, however, of no consideration with the *haut ton*, among whom at present it exclusively is), as a matter of course, vastly superior. In process of time, when the manufacture has arrived at a more perfect state, and all its little defects remedied, and its wastings discovered, it will in all probability come within the reach of most classes of society, but at present its cost is its only drawback. The magnificence of its appearance is quite remarkable, and when used in any considerable quantity, such as window-curtains, &c., it should be seen before a just appreciation of its richness and elegance can be entertained.—*Newspaper paragraph.*

#### CONDUCT BEFORE THE KING AND QUEEN.

In the first place, you must not cough. If you find a cough tickling in your throat, you must arrest it from making any sound; if you find yourself choking with the forbearance, you must choke—but not cough. In the second place, you must not sneeze. If you have a vehement cold, you must take no notice of it: if your nose-membranes feel a great irritation, you must hold your breath; if a sneeze still insists upon making its way, you must oppose it, by keeping your teeth grinding together; if the violence of the repulse breaks some blood-vessel, you must break the blood-vessel—but not sneeze. In the third place, you must not, upon any account, stir either hand or foot. If by chance a black pin runs into your head, you must not take it out. If the pain is very great, you must be sure to bear it without wincing; if it brings the tears into your eyes, you must not wipe them off; if they give you a tingling by running down your cheeks, you must look as if nothing was the matter. If the blood should gush from your head, by means of the black pin, you must let it gush; if you are uneasy to think of making such a blurred appearance, you must be uneasy, but you must say nothing about it. If, however, the agony is very great, you may privately bite the inside of your cheek, or of your lips, for a little relief; taking care, meanwhile, to do so cautiously as to make no apparent dent outwardly. And, with that precaution, if you even gnaw a piece out, it will not be minded, only be sure either to swallow it, or commit it to a corner of the inside of your mouth till they are gone—for you must not spit. I have many other directions, but no more paper; I will endeavour, however, to have them ready for you in time. Perhaps, meanwhile, you would be glad to know if I have myself had opportunity to put in practice these receipts?—*Madame D'Arbly's Diary.*

#### QUACKERY.

Quackery, like sin, is very ancient. It flourished in ancient Rome as well as in modern Europe. Nor does it depend for its prosperity on the ignorance of the uneducated classes. "The desire of wealth and health," says Pitt, "seems to put all understandings on a level: the avaricious are duped by every bubble—the lame and unhealthy by every quack." The faith of that singular compound of folly and knavery, the world, is kept up by peers, judges, and bishops, by clowns, operatives, and old women, who furnish certificates to the value of nostrums, and testify in favour of imposture, delusion, and villany. Every material substance and medicament, from the inert herb and common weed to simple water, having no properties beyond mere matter, have been at one period or another boasted up to the vain and empty nothingness of a great name, as the best remedy in the world for the inward bruises of all mankind. Indeed, each has possessed in turn the same reputation, and produced the same imputed benefits as a panacea for the cure of every disease under the sun; and their imaginary virtues have been witnessed and attested by persons from the throne to the garret. In this country the sale of quack medicines has kept pace with the "march of intellect." Forty years ago they yielded an annual revenue to the state of about £14,000. In 1841 the amount realised was £50,000. For the last half century, English governments have looked upon this vile revenue as more valuable, in their judgment, than the health of the people, the prosperity of the regular profession, and the improvement of physic. "They manage these things better in France." There the compositions of all nostrums are divulged, compulsorily, to the Academy of Medicine; after which

a license is given for the sale of them, if they are not injurious to the public health. The sale of hurtful nostrums is prohibited by penalties. As to other nostrums, the quack may sell, the dupe may buy—the government only interfering with "the liberty of the subject" (whether that subject be quack or dupe) for the protection of life.—*Abridged from a Paper by Dr Fothergill of Chester.*

#### LINES ON REVISITING THE COUNTRY.

(BY SYLVANT, AN AMERICAN POET.)

I STAND upon my native hills again,  
Broad, round, and green, that in the southern sky,  
With garniture of waving grass and grain,  
Orchards and beechen forests, basking lie;  
While deep the sunless glens are scooped between,  
Where brawls o'er shallow beds the streams unseen.

A hisping voice and glancing eyes are near,  
And ever-restless steps of one, who now  
Gathers the blossoms of her fourth bright year;  
There plays a gladness o'er her fair young brow,  
As breaks the varied scene upon her sight,  
Unheaved, and spread in verdure and in light.

For I have taught her, with delighted eye,  
To gaze upon the mountains—to behold,  
With deep affection, the pure, ample sky,  
And clouds along the blue abysses roll'd—  
To love the song of waters, and to hear  
The melody of winds with charmed ear.

Here I have 'scaped the city's stifling heat,  
Its horrid sounds, and its polluted air;  
And—where the season's milder fervours beat,  
And gales, that sweep the forest borders, bear  
The song of bird and sound of running stream—  
Have come awhile to wander and to dream.

Ay, flame thy fiercest, sun; thou canst not wake,  
In this pure air, the plague that walks unseen;  
The maize leaf and the maple bough but take  
From thy fierce heats a deeper, glossier green;  
The mountain wind, that faints not in thy ray,  
Sweeps the blue steams of pestilence away.

The mountain wind—most spiritual thing of all  
The wide earth knows—when, in the sultry time,  
He stoops him from his vast cerulean hall,  
He seems the breath of a celestial clime—  
As if from Heaven's wide open gates did flow  
Health and refreshment on the world below.

—*Selections from American Poets.*

#### TEMPERANCE IN IRELAND.

On this subject it affords us much pleasure to give the following letter (extracted from a newspaper) by Miss Edgeworth, dated "Edgeworthstown, Feb. 28, 1842," to R. Allen, Esq., Secretary of the Irish Temperance Union, Dublin:—

"Sir,—Your letter needs no apology. I thank you for having thought it worth while to apply to me, and for desiring to have my opinion on the Temperance Association, along with those of the most benevolent and enlightened friends of humanity.

I am happy to be able—by all the experience we have had in this neighbourhood, and by all that I have heard of evidence from different parts of the country—to confirm the accounts you have from all parts of Britain, and especially from Mr. Clarkson—the venerable Clarkson, as you justly call him. I should content myself with saying—as once a gentleman did after hearing a speech of Burke's—'I say ditto to Mr. Burke.'—I say ditto to Mr. Clarkson—but that I think it may be useful to this good cause, that all should give specific individual evidence of what they know of their own knowledge of the operation of this temperance pledge.

In our village of Edgeworthstown, the whisky-selling has diminished, since the pledge has been taken, within the last two years, so as to leave public houses empty, and to oblige the landlord to lower house-rent considerably. This we know to our pecuniary loss—I need not add, to our moral satisfaction.

The appearance of the people—their quiet demeanour at markets and fairs—has wonderfully improved in general; and to the knowledge of this family, many notorious drinkers, and some, as it was thought, confirmed drunkards, have been completely reformed by taking the pledge.

They have become able and willing to work, and to take care of their farms and business—are decently clothed, and healthy and happy—and now make their wives and children happy, instead, as before the reformation, miserable and broken-hearted. I have heard some of the strong expressions of delight of several of the wives of the reformed drunkards. One wife said to me, 'Ma'am, I'm the happiest woman now that can be; sure, he says he is wakened from a dream, and now he goes about his business so well; and, ma'am, he can eat more, and he can bear the noise of the children, which he never could formerly.'

I have heard of many instances where the health has been improved, even where the 'total abstinence' began late in life, and after habits of daily intemperance.

I have not known of any in which the health has suffered. Very few instances of breaking the pledge have as yet come to our knowledge in this neighbourhood, but some have occurred. The culprits have been completely shunned and disgraced, so that they are awful warnings to others.

So long as public opinion is upheld in this manner, and so continues to act, we may hope that this great power—this inestimable moral blessing to Ireland, in particular, will continue; and most earnestly I hope and pray that it may.

Beyond all calculations—beyond all the predictions of experience, and all the examples from the past, and all analogy, this wonderful crusade against the bad habits of nations—the bad habits and sensual tastes of individuals—has succeeded and lasted for above two years.

It is amazing, and proves the power of moral and religious influence and motive, beyond any other example on record in history.

I consider Father Mathew as the greatest benefactor to his country—the most true friend to Irishmen and to Ireland.—I am, sir, with the most earnest wish for the continued success of your great cause, yours truly,  
MARIA EDGEWORTH."

#### FRENCH IDEAS OF ENGLISH SPORT.

After horses, greyhounds, foxes, pigeons, and bull-dogs, we at length come to boxers—the last class of sport, which holds brutes in greater esteem than men; for do not fancy that this classification is the effect of chance, and of a sense of shame or disgust. Not so; the English do nothing without an intention; they never blush at what they do, and are enraptured with delight at the hideous sight of two desperate boxers. Thus the last rank allotted in the hierarchy of sport to those ignoble fights, proves only, that if they tremble when their horse has caught a cold, they have somewhat less feeling when they behold a man's ribs knocked in. In those combats every thing is opprobrious and repulsive—ay, every thing, from the toothless mouth and the brutal looks of those degraded beings, to the preparations and precautions destined to prolong the combat. Each second brings his champion a pail of water, a large horse sponge, and a bottle of brandy or wine. The heroes are stripped to the waist, and, at first, totter, as much from fear as from drunkenness; but the murmurs of the spectators soon warn them that they have not come to witness mere childish play. Vanity then prevails over fear, and the combat becomes serious. At every tooth that drops, at every rib that breaks, at every eye that falls out, there are voices that shout "Bravo!" and hands that applaud. The struggle has already lasted an hour; the boxers are exhausted; they can scarcely stand; their faces are bruised, and covered with blood; their bodies present but a huge sore. But they have not yet rested and assailed one another above fifty times, and a proper combat must be renewed at least sixty or seventy. Their seconds apply the sponge to the flowing blood, wash their eyes, noses, and ears, pour wine or brandy down their throats; and the blows resound again, until one of them, panting, exhausted, almost dead, falls down to get up no more. And yet the crowd is often dissatisfied; often does it cry that there has been treachery or cowardice—instead of one corpse it would have two. This is the ugly side of sport in England, for it is not the populace only that encourage these loathsome spectacles; the most elegant men blush not to witness them, and to speculate upon the fists of a boxer with the same coolness as they speculate upon a horse's legs. In this department of sport we shall never be on a level with the English, and we can but congratulate ourselves upon it.  
—*La Presse.*

#### EDITORIAL NOTE.

THE EDITORS OF CHAMBERS'S EDINBURGH JOURNAL again beg to intimate that they do not wish any contributions, and that they will not be responsible for the safe-keeping or the return of papers pressed upon them notwithstanding these repeated announcements. They also would respectfully submit, that it is too much to expect them to attend to or answer all the letters sent to them. The greater proportion of these communications are inquiries on subjects which the writers themselves, by a small share of industry, could easily settle to their own satisfaction. At all events, the Editors have such onerous duties to perform to the public, in the conducting of the present and the other works on which they are engaged, that to attend to the many inquiries put to them is entirely out of the question. Some may be inclined to think this unbecomingly; a knowledge of the facts would show that such was not the case. Many of these correspondents seem not to have the slightest notion that they are giving trouble, or that they have not established a claim to be answered to the full extent of their demands. Were the Editors to publish some of their letters, they would form an amusing farrago of conceit, spite, and folly. The class of persons whom a statesman described as bothering him with advice to tax pianos and umbrellas, are a type of these letter-writers. One sends a long, ill-spelled communication respecting the millennium, which, he says, from a peculiar combination of certain letters of the alphabet and certain figures, is proved will take place in the present year—he is anxious to know if his calculations are correct. A second has discovered the perpetual motion, "and could make watches go by the same power that governs the motions of the planets"—the Editors are to be rewarded with half the profits if they will be at the expense of taking out a patent for the discovery. A third is a person residing in England, who thinks he is somehow related to a family of distinction and wealth in the north—he requests to be furnished with a private history of the said family for two centuries back;—expenses of search will be cheerfully paid. A fourth is most anxious to discover the origin of his name, and will go the length of half a guinea to be satisfied on the subject. Not a few ask a candid opinion on the merits of parcels of poetry (!) which they enclose for perusal. But, as above mentioned, the greater proportion ask answers to questions of the most trifling nature. At least six persons have asked why the pages of the "Information for the People" are not numbered, any one of whom might have seen that the pages are numbered—the only peculiarity being that the figures are placed at the bottom instead of the top of the page. Perhaps a dozen persons have asked to be furnished with the address of Dr Turnbull in London, although it is expressly mentioned in the article referring to that gentleman that he lives in Russell Square; and surely it could not be very difficult for an inquirer to find out all the rest himself; some people, however, never seem to be able to do any thing for themselves—they always require somebody to lead them or push them on. Once for all, the Editors do not know any thing more of Dr Turnbull's address than that it is—Russell Square, London. London is a large city in England, and may be reached by stage-coaches, railways, or steam-boats. On arrival, a good plan would be to hire a street cab (contraction of cabriolet), and tell the cabman to drive to Dr Turnbull's, Russell Square; and leave him to find out the house, which there is little fear of his doing. It is hoped this will be considered sufficiently explicit.

The Editors, in conclusion, have a more pleasing duty to perform in thanking many kind friends for their obliging hints, observations, and corrections of errors, which they indulgently and properly ascribe to inadvertency. In all cases in which the errors are not imaginary but real, care is taken to correct them in subsequent impressions.

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